

**BEFORE THE HEARING BOARD
OF THE
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY REGISTRATION
AND
DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION**

In the Matter of:

RONALD JAY MC DERMOTT,

Commission No. 2012PR00052

Attorney-Respondent,

FILED - May 30, 2012

No. 6208095.

COMPLAINT

Jerome Larkin, Administrator of the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission, by his attorney, Scott Renfroe, pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 753(b), complains of Respondent Ronald Jay McDermott, who was licensed to practice law in Illinois on November 7, 1991, and alleges that Respondent has engaged in the following conduct which tends to defeat the administration of justice or to bring the courts or the legal profession into disrepute, and which subjects Respondent to discipline pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 770:

(False Billing)

1. In 2011, Respondent was employed by a law firm in Chicago. During his employment at the firm, Respondent prepared records of the time he expended on behalf of clients, and he knew that any time he recorded, unless it was edited out of the bills by another attorney, would be billed to the firm's clients at an hourly rate of \$250.

2.. Between June 13, 2011 and June 30, 2011, Respondent was involved in reviewing documents for a project involving a client of the firm's. During that time, Respondent recorded a total of 37.5 hours on the project. In July and August of 2011, Respondent performed little or no work on the client matter, but recorded 83.3 and 177.1 hours, respectively, on the matter. Respondent's sixteen entries for July and 31 entries for August were limited to one of three similar descriptions of work he claimed to have performed, in amounts of time ranging from 3.5 to 6.0 hours each day.

3. Respondent's description of the services he claimed to have provided in July and August, and the descriptions of the services he claimed to have provided, were false, because Respondent recorded time for services he did not actually provide in amounts that vastly overstated any actual amount of work he performed.

4. On August 31, 2011, the firm sent a bill to its client asking it to pay, among other charges, \$20,825 for the 83.3 hours Respondent claimed to have expended on the client's behalf in July. Respondent's false billing was discovered before his false billings for August, totaling \$44,275, were sent to the client. Respondent's firm later waived the \$30,250 it charged its client for Respondent's purported work during June and July, 2011.

5. By reason of the conduct described above, Respondent has engaged in the following misconduct:

- a. attempted to charge an unreasonable fee, in violation of Rules 8.4(a)(1) and 1.5(a) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010);

- b. conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit or misrepresentation, in violation of Rule 8.4(c) of the Illinois Rules of Professional Conduct (2010); and
- c. conduct which tends to defeat the administration of justice, or to bring the courts or the legal profession into disrepute.

WHEREFORE, the Administrator respectfully requests that this matter be assigned to a panel of the Hearing Board, that a hearing be held, and that the panel make findings of fact, conclusions of fact and law, and a recommendation for such discipline as is warranted.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Larkin, Administrator
Attorney Registration and
Disciplinary Commission

By: Scott Renfroe

Scott Renfroe
Counsel for Administrator
One Prudential Plaza
130 East Randolph Drive, Suite 1500
Chicago, Illinois 60601-6219
Telephone: (312) 565-2600